

Arts in the Parks

Monroe Lake Property Profile

Website: <http://www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/2954.htm>

Key Messages/Stories:

- As the largest body of water in Indiana, Monroe Lake offers a wide range of multiple-use recreational and seasonal opportunities. The lake is nestled in the rolling hills and woodlands of south central Indiana, about 10 miles southeast of Bloomington. The dam is on Salt Creek, a tributary of the East Fork of White River. Most of the lake area lies in Monroe County, with a smaller area in Brown and Jackson counties. Monroe Lake is operated primarily for flood control and low-flow augmentation in the Salt Creek and White River watersheds by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
- The lake area provides fish and wildlife resources, and an opportunity for outdoor activities associated with large bodies of water. The project was dedicated in October 1964, and opened in 1966. Monroe Lake and environs comprise a total of 23,952 acres.
- The entire area, with its rolling topography, bluffs, scenic streams, and heavily wooded sections offers outstanding scenic vistas as well as numerous recreational opportunities.
- Prior to the development of the reservoir area and the adjacent Hoosier National Forest, the area largely consisted of small family farms and a highly-localized community structure. Extreme flooding and erosion kept farms at the family-subsistence level of development. It was a very rural area with only loose ties to the more affluent neighboring city of Bloomington.

Top Five Things to Do:

- Boating on the main lake; paddling in the back-water
- Swimming at Fairfax or Paynetown
- Numerous fishing/hunting opportunities
- Camping at Paynetown
- Resort stay at Fairfax

Lodging: Campground at Paynetown SRA; Fourwinds Resort at Fairfax SRA

General visitor profile: Overall, summer audience is boaters, swimmers, anglers, and drinkers – lots of free-roaming children. Fall audience is more traditional – families looking for activities to do together (much less emphasis on water sports). Paynetown visitation in summer/fall comes from both campers and day visitors. Both groups tend to be predominantly from the local region (Monroe and surrounding counties, plus Indianapolis). Fairfax visitation in summer/fall comes from Resort guests, boaters, and a local audience for the swimming beach (largely from Lawrence County and western Monroe County). The audience at other areas of the property is predominantly boaters during the summer, hunters in the fall/winter, plus hikers and wildlife-watchers year-round.



Potential arts venues:

- Paynetown SRA
 - Amphitheater: uncovered stage, projection screen, electricity, lighting, bench seating for about 50 people (plus additional seating available on concrete surrounding walls and space for people to bring their own chairs); bathrooms available; kitchen inside adjoining Activity Center
 - Activity Center Shelter (35-person capacity): covered shelter with concrete pad, electricity, lights, area surrounding shelter is gravel; limited seating (4 picnic tables that can be moved inside or outside the shelter); bathrooms available; kitchen inside adjoining Activity Center
 - Activity Center Patio: open-area on mix of concrete pad and wood decking; electricity; bench seating along perimeter for about 20 people; bathrooms available; kitchen inside adjoining Activity Center
 - Beach: sand; bathrooms available; kitchen inside nearby Activity Center
 - Deer Run Shelter (35-person capacity): covered shelter with concrete pad, electricity, lights, area surrounding shelter is grass; limited seating (picnic tables are mostly fixed in place under shelter); bathrooms available; playground adjacent
 - Lakeview Shelter (35-person capacity): covered shelter with concrete pad, electricity, lights, area surrounding shelter is grass with open-air picnic areas; limited seating (picnic tables fixed in place inside shelter); bathrooms available
- Fairfax SRA
 - Beach: sand; bathrooms available
 - Big Oak Shelter (50-person capacity): covered shelter with concrete pad, electricity, lights, area surrounding shelter is grass; limited seating (picnic tables fixed in place inside shelter); bathrooms available; hiking trail adjacent
 - Bay View Shelter (35-person capacity): covered shelter with concrete pad, electricity, lights, area surrounding shelter is grass; limited seating (picnic tables fixed in place inside shelter); hiking trail adjacent
 - Fourwinds Resort: multiple venues inside (meeting rooms, ballroom) and decks/patios outside (tent set-up possible); bathrooms; restaurants; electricity; lighting --- Fourwinds is under private management, so use of this facility is at the discretion of the Resort manager, Tony Suttle.

Visitation in FY2014: over 1.5 million; biggest visitation is at Paynetown and Fairfax SRAs

Nearby Communities: Bloomington, Martinsville, Nashville, Bedford, Harrodsburg, Heltonville

Please email questions to Artsintheparks@dnr.IN.gov.

